



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594
Office of Marine Safety

Date: 10/18/2006

Place: Morgan City, LA (phone)

Person Interviewed: Herbert Oubre, Captain of T/V *Yancy O*

Interview Conducted By: Liam LaRue,
Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

INTRODUCTION

Herbert Oubre was interviewed in conjunction with the Marine Board of Investigation concerning the *Athena 106 barge*. The text that follows is not a verbatim record of the conversation. It has been developed from my handwritten notes of the conversation and is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge and recollection.

INTERVIEW

- Owns South Central Towing – owns two tugs, and a small crew boat (Miss Gloria)
- Was the Captain on the Yancy O when the accident occurred
- Yancy O is a 38-foot, twin screw, shallow water tug
- Has owned S. Central Towing since 1981
- Fire happened around 1215 – he was on deck working on Parker Rig 8
- Heard about the fire on the radio – he was on the front deck of the Yancy O
- Yancy O was $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from the 106 barge
- The whole tug and both barges were engulfed in flames – the only part not covered in flames was the stern of the Miss Megan
- He immediately went over to the fire – took around 15-20 minutes to get there because the tide was so low and it was difficult to make headway
- Could not see anyone in the water or moving on the barges

- Got within 400-500 feet and could feel the heat
- Eased up as close as possible – around 300 feet
- Saw one man in the water and looked for survivors – the smaller crew boats would pick them up – it's difficult to pull people out from a tug boat
- All they could do was watch and look for survivors initially
- After around 15-20 minutes the lines holding the tug and deck barge burned and it began to drift into the oil field
- As soon as the tug and deck barge cleared the spud barge he started putting water on it
- It took about 30-45 minutes before they could put a line on it – put a short tow line on the Miss Megan's port quarter bit (20 foot line)
- Continued to put water on the vessel as they towed it
- Miss Joanne and Tiger were assisting with the firefighting efforts
- The creosote pilings were burning
- Crew boat arrived at the scene of the accident first and did the searching for survivors because they are faster, more maneuverable, and low to the water
- Doesn't remember the names of any particular crew boats that responded
- Fishing boats were helping out – he remembers seeing one crab fisherman out there
- Has a ship's log with more accurate times that he will submit to the SF group chairman
- There were no fire boats
- He was so busy battling the fire that he doesn't remember when the police boats got there
- He piloted the boat while his deckhand manned the hose.
- He has an electric fire pump on board with one standard size fire hose (1 1/2 – 2 inches) with adjustable nozzle.

END OF INTERVIEW

Liam LaRue